



# Helsby Parish Council

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## Minutes of the meeting of Helsby Parish Council held virtually at 7pm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 via Zoom

### Present:

Cllr. Peter Duffy – Chairman  
Cllr. John Kimpton  
Cllr. Sarah Temple  
Claire Jones, Parish Clerk

Cllr. Chris Ellams  
Cllr. George Randles  
Cllr. Mike Branigan

Cllr. Michelle Massey  
Cllr. Allan Fincham  
Cllr. Terry O’Neill

### In attendance:

Mrs Marj Thoburn representing Helsby News  
Mr Colin Abbott, local resident

**Chairman’s announcements:** The Chairman thanked all those organisers and volunteers involved with the village litter pick event held on 12<sup>th</sup> September.

1. Public Air Time. Proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED – that the meeting be suspended for public participation – HPC100/20.** Mr Abbott expressed his concern in relation to the continued closure of Old Chester Road. He outlined that he had tried to make contact with Cllr. Bowers on numerous occasions but had received no response. He expressed his disgust and disbelief that the road had been closed for a total of 38 months and he felt that lack of response by Councillor Bowers was appalling. There being no other matters brought to the members’ attention, it was proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Kimpton and **RESOLVED – that Public Air Time be closed and the meeting reconvened – HPC101/20.**
2. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs. Holder, Porter and Gardner and PCSO, Lauren Davies.
3. Declarations of Interest. Cllrs. O’Neill and Randles declared non-pecuniary interest in Item 15. Cllr. Ellams declared an interest in Item 18.4.
4. Police Matters
  - 4.1 The report circulated by PCSO Davies on 15 August after the last meeting was noted.
  - 4.2 PCSO Davies sent the following update by e-mail which was noted as follows:
    - Residents had raised some concerns of anti-social behaviour in the park off Lower Robin Hood Lane and had questioned the positioning and possible removal of the picnic benches and the youth pod there. She felt that as the summer was over and she hadn’t received a large number of complaints, the issue could wait for further investigation next Spring. She urged local residents to also report any issues via the force website and by calling 101;

- Patrols were continuing at Helsby Quarry following reports of possible drug taking there; and
- 9 speeding tickets and 1 vehicle defect ticket had been issued at the speed enforcement day held on 5/9/20 across Frodsham and Helsby.

**4.3** It was agreed that the Council would take the advice of the PCSO in relation to the complaint received about anti-social behaviour at Helsby park and review the situation in Spring 2021. Cllr. Temple also raised a separate incident in relation to trespassers on the roof of the scout hut roof.

**4.4** The clerk was asked to follow up 2 concerns with PCSO Davies that had been reported via the Helsby Facebook page: an incident whereby a motorist had crashed into railings and the Council's noticeboard in the ginnel between Mountain View and Chester Road (both had been subsequently repaired) and reports of motorcyclists using the same ginnel to access Mountain View.

**5.** Minutes of the previous meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Ellams, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020 be accepted as accurate and duly signed by the Chairman – HPC102/20.**

**6.** Matters arising from the previous meeting

**6.1** The following member's reports were received:

- Progress on the re-opening of Old Chester Road. Councillors expressed their disappointment about the lack of a response from CW&C's Chief Executive and the ongoing failure to progress any work. It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED to write a further letter to express our concern along with an FOI request to ask for a copy of the geological fault report associated with a resident's wall which now appears to be causing the delay, copied to Cllr. Bowers – HPC103/20.**
- It was noted that the goalpost had now been removed from the park. PCA Committee to explore the feasibility of a 5 or 7-a-side pitch as a possible alternative.

**7.** Cheshire West and Chester Council

**7.1** No correspondence was reported.

**7.2** Cllr. Temple outlined that she had responded to the following CW&C consultation: 'Preliminary Stakeholder Dialogue - Play Strategy Update/Review - Questionnaire distribution to Members and Parish and Town Councils'. It was reported that a further public consultation exercise would be held once CW&C had produced the draft strategy update.

**7.3** Cllr Bowers was not present nor had he sent a report.

**7.4** Cllr. O'Neill outlined that a ChALC/CW&C virtual parish conference would be held on 5 October. Cllrs. Randles and Fincham expressed their concern that the maintenance of local gutters by CW&C did not appear to be adequate at present.

**8.** The Chairman presented the draft minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 19th August 2020. The following was noted/agreed:

**8.1** Cllr. Temple proposed a number of amendments to the draft COVID-19 workplace statement. Clerk and Chairman to action;

**8.2** It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED to**

**approve the Health and Safety Policy with no amendments – HPC104/20;**

**8.3** It was noted that any Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) of electrical equipment would be carried out following the move to the new office;

**8.4** PCA Committee to look into the general assistant's brushcutter certification at their next meeting; and

**8.5** Cllr. Gardner had carried out an inspection of the cemetery garage and had recommended replacement of the door as an interim measure. Clerk to circulate his findings.

**9.** Cllr. O'Neill presented the draft minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 19th August 2020. The following was noted/agreed:

**9.1** A meeting with representatives from HPC, CW&C and Open Eye would be held on 30 September to take forward the S106 public art project;

**9.2** Cllr. Randles had approached the Rotary Club who had agreed to carry out some daffodil planting on Chester Road;

**9.3** The contents of the lease for Maltby Triangle were noted;

**9.4** Clerk to arrange a working party to carry out repairs to the outdoor gym at Sherwood Court following recommendations made in April's ROSPA report;

**9.5** It was proposed that the Council does not continue with the annual servicing arrangements for the village clock from 2021 and instead resolves to pay for any repairs as and when required;

**9.6** Following a complaint from a local business owner, it was proposed to request the general assistant to renovate the paint work on the 'Welcome to Helsby' sign once the flowers had been removed from the display;

**9.7** It was proposed to ask scout leader, Colin Ashcroft, if he might be willing to take on the role of litter pick co-ordinator as the current co-ordinator would be stepping down shortly. It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED to formally thank Betty Grieve for her generous services to the village – HPC105/20;**

**9.8** It was proposed to forward any invoices for repairs from TWM Traffic to CW&C given correspondence from them in relation to their ownership of the Interactive Speed Sign on Chester Road. Clerk to also refer to this in the asset register;

**9.9** Committee members considered any additions to this year's Christmas lights. Cllr. Massey suggested a smaller reindeer;

**9.10** In relation to the recently adopted telephone box opposite Bates Lane, Chester Road, it was outlined that the Council was committed to the installation of a defibrillator. It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED for the clerk to explore the feasibility of grant funding for a unit – HPC106/20;**

**9.11** It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED for the clerk to obtain cost estimates for replacing the Council's North and Central noticeboards and for purchasing an additional noticeboard in South Ward – HPC107/20;**

**9.12** It was noted that MP, Mike Amesbury, had written to the Council in relation to a request from a local resident about gritting provision in the village. Cllr. O'Neill outlined that he had looked into the matter and had sent some information on CW&C gritting responsibilities to the local resident. It was agreed that it would be raised again at the next Environment Committee.

## 10. Financial Matters

- 10.1** Bank reconciliation. Proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED that the bank reconciliation sheet detailing £222,237.88 held in balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> August be accepted as accurate – HPC108/20.**
- 10.2** Receipts and Payments. Proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Ellams and **RESOLVED that the following payments totalling £7,358.34 paid by either standing order, direct debit, bank transfer, cheque or under delegated authority for August be approved and duly noted – HPC109/20.** The following receipts totalling £23.69 were also noted:

### Payments

Date	Method	To whom paid	Particulars of payment	Amount (£)
01.08.20	SO	Arndale Transport	Rent - August 2020	320.00
17.08.20	DD	Water Plus	Water - community centre	30.48
17.08.20	DD	Scottish Power	Electricity - community centre	129.00
19.08.20	DPC	CW&C	Community Centre Recharge	2741.23
19.08.20	DPC	Eddie Bougen	Cemetery maintenance	388.00
19.08.20	DPC	Eddie Bougen	Cemetery weeding	40.00
19.08.20	DPC	C Jones	Office supplies	29.54
19.08.20	DPC	Northwich TC	Grass cutting	852.60
21.08.20	DPC	BT	Line rental	82.77
28.08.20	DPC	HPC staff	Salaries August 2020	1,909.48
28.08.20	DPC	HMRC	Deductions Tax and NI Aug 2020	590.77
28.08.20	DD	NEST	Pension contribution August	244.47

### Receipts

Date	Method	From whom paid	Particulars of payment	Amount (£)
24.08.20	DPC	F J Keeffe	Allotment rent fee	23.50
28.08.20	Auto	Natwest	Interest August 2020	0.19

- 10.3** It was noted that the Notice for the Exercise of the Public's Right to inspect the Council's 2019/20 accounts and ask questions was being displayed on the website and noticeboard.
- 10.4** A decision by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) in relation to the new pay scales for 2020-21 to be implemented from 1 April 2020 (an increase of approximately 2.75%) was noted. It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and **RESOLVED to accept these new pay scale recommendations in principle and advised the HR Committee to work through the details in relation to the payment of salaries – HPC110/20.**
- 10.5** It was noted that the Council was still waiting for a response from the external auditor in relation to the 2019/20 accounts.
- 11.** Cycle North Cheshire – Cllr. Duffy outlined that a meeting had been held on 8 September but minutes were not available as yet.

12. Burial Grants – the clerk outlined that a burial grant had been issued to Mr Harley of Helsby for plot Central 2 in Helsby Public Cemetery (to be approved by Council at the next meeting).
13. Protos – Cllr. Temple outlined that a Benefit Fund meeting had been arranged on 16 September and the AGM followed by a Community Forum meeting would be held on 23 September. Following complaints of noise by residents, Cllr. Temple advised that she had been in contact with Protos in relation to the current operation of the biomass plant and would raise the issue at the forum.
14. Helsby Community Association – following a recent resignation, it was outlined that the association had issued a plea for further assistance. Cllr. Branigan agreed to offer some support. Clerk to forward Cllr. Branigan’s contact details to the management committee. Cllr. Randles expressed concern that CW&C had been carrying out some work in the centre without the knowledge of the HCA or the Council. Cllr. Ellams stated that he was helping the management committee with the booking system following resignation of the secretary.
15. Helsby Community Sports Club – Cllr. Randles advised that the building should be finished by 4 December. Cllr. Temple outlined that some discussions had been held in relation to the lease of the new parish office. Cllr. Temple proposed, Cllr. Duffy seconded and it was **RESOLVED that the lease should be checked through by the Council’s solicitor before final sign off – HPC111/20.**
16. Cheshire Association of Local Councils – Cllr. O’Neill reported that the Cheshire Award Scheme was on hold due to COVID and there would be no increase in membership fees next year. It was advised that the association were exploring how they might hold a virtual AGM. Cllr. O’Neill outlined that the major concern currently in discussion by ChALC was the White Paper on Planning which could have major implications for the Council. It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O’Neill and **RESOLVED to write to the local MP to voice our concerns and oppose to many of the recommendations proposed in the paper – HPC112/20.**
17. Transport and Wind Farm Matters – Cllr. Ellams outlined that the latest round of the Community Benefit Fund had closed to applications at the end of August. It was outlined that British Transport Police were at Helsby Station recently to ensure that the public were adhering to the Government’s COVID regulations.
18. Miscellaneous Matters
  - 18.1 The clerk outlined that there had been several changes to tenancies, including Mr Keefe and Ms Goodier at the Old Chester Road site (Council to approve all new agreements at the next meeting).
  - 18.2 It was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED to approve the clerk’s attendance at the SLCC’s Virtual National Conference from 12-16 October at a cost of £25 plus VAT – HPC113/20.**
  - 18.3 It was proposed by Cllr. Duffy, seconded by Cllr. Branigan and **RESOLVED to approve the clerk and Cllr. Temple’s attendance at the following ICCM online training**

- courses at a cost of £700 plus VAT: Sexton Duties; Exclusive Rights of Burial; and Cemetery Management and Compliance – HPC114/20.**
- 18.4 Beer Heroes – Clerk to respond to a local resident who had made a complaint in relation to the business allegedly not adhering to its licensing conditions and COVID regulations.
- 18.5 CF Fertilisers – Cllr. O’Neill outlined that he had organised a community liaison meeting on 25 September following some concerns raised by a local resident. He had requested noise monitor data to be shared by CF Fertilisers at the meeting.
- 18.6 Nub News – Cllr. Temple asked if the Council wished to consider an input to this new website. It was agreed that the clerk would respond to say the Council would be interested in publicising meeting dates and other such information. Cllr. Massey agreed to consider how the Council might best communicate via social media in future.
- 18.7 COVID 19 guidance - It was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Temple and **RESOLVED that the Council should continue to meet virtually at the present time, keep the office closed to the public and postpone resuming any Councillor surgeries – HPC115/20.**
- 18.8 It was proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Duffy and **RESOLVED that the Parish Council approves the ordering of winter pansies from Dave Weaver – HPC116/20.**
- 18.9 The clerk outlined that the general assistant would shortly be taking some annual leave. Cllr. Fincham agreed to take on his bin emptying duties in his absence.
- 18.10 It was proposed by Cllr. Temple, seconded by Cllr. O’Neill and **RESOLVED that the clerk would obtain three quotes for the provision of this year’s Christmas tree and investigate any arrangements with Ho Ho Helsby – HPC117/20.**
- 18.11 It was proposed by Cllr. Randles, seconded by Cllr. Kimpton and **RESOLVED to order a wreath for Remembrance Day – HPC118/20.**

## 19. Planning

- 19.1 The Council’s responses to the following planning applications were duly noted:

App no.	Application address	Proposed development	Recommendations
20/02592/LBC	Helsby Signal Box, Helsby Railway Station	Proposed repairs and refurbishment	No objections
20/02351/FUL	Teuthill, Tarvin Rd	Conversion of existing outbuilding to living space	No objections

- 19.2 It was noted that an appeal in relation to 8 Old Chester Road, Helsby (19/00710/FUL - 3-bed detached dwelling) was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate on 24 August 2020 (ref: APP/A0665/W/20/3252044).
- 19.3 It was noted that a new planning application had been submitted for 20/00324/FUL (Land at Cable Drive) with a closing date for responses of 22 September. It was also noted that Rob Charnley had responded to the Council’s letter to say that CW&C was not in a position to get all parties together. Cllr. Randles therefore proposed that HPC took the lead in organising a meeting with the developers as well as holding a public consultation exercise. It was proposed by Cllr. O’Neill, seconded by Cllr. Randles and **RESOLVED to seek an extension to the deadline, set up a meeting with Dunham and Hapsford Parish Council initially to agree on the best approach and then seek to**

**meet the developers and look towards a public consultation – HPC119/20.**

**19.4** Cllr. Temple outlined that she had been made aware that a development recently granted permission on Proffits Lane might not be in conformity with its planning conditions. She agreed to investigate the matter further.

**20.** Dates of the next Council meetings.

28 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Human Resources Committee
28 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Finance Committee
12 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	Parish Council meeting

The meeting closed at 9.03pm

Chairman's signature..... Dated.....